



LINCOLN CHAFEE

U.S. SENATOR

RHODE ISLAND

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CHAFEE ANNOUNCES \$1 MILLION FOR RHODE ISLAND REFUGE COMPLEX

WASHINGTON, DC – U.S. Senator Lincoln Chafee announced that \$1 million will be appropriated to the Rhode Island Refuge Complex as part of the Fiscal Year 2004 Department of Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations bill. The Rhode Island Refuge Complex, consisting of five National Wildlife Refuges, encompassing a diverse array of coastal wetlands, grasslands, salt marshes, dunes, and beaches.

“Wildlife refuges are among the most important ecological sites in our state,” Chafee said. “The environmental benefits of strong, healthy wildlife habitats are immense. As we continue to develop more and more coastline, I am committed to making the work of the Rhode Island Refuge Complex a top environmental priority,” Chafee continued.

“We are extremely pleased to receive this \$1 million for land acquisitions. This will allow us to protect some of Rhode Island’s best natural habitats at John H. Chafee, Trustum Pond and Ninigret National Wildlife Refuges,” said Charlie Vandemoer, Refuge Manager of the Rhode Island National Wildlife Refuge Complex. “Only because of the hard work and dedication to conservation of our Congressional delegation were these funds made available.”

As residential development continues to stress Rhode Island’s open spaces, particularly in the southern portions of the state, an infusion of capital is needed to protect some of the remaining habitat associated with our coastal refuges. The funds will also help the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service with the resources necessary to complete several important land acquisition projects.

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